



# MOTIVATIONAL DRIVERS BEHIND SECOND-HAND LUXURY CONSUMPTION

A Qualitative Exploration of Consumption Motivations in Finland

Liisa Maria Orvokki Antola

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Bachelor's Thesis

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### **Objectives**

The main objectives of this study were to find out the motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption, luxury consumption and finally, second-hand luxury consumption. The first two were investigated in the literature review, and the motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption were researched through a qualitative exploration.

### **Summary**

Luxury consumption is no longer restricted to brand new luxury goods. Instead, the resale of luxury goods is further increasing. Therefore, a need for a better understanding of the consumer segment participating in this new retail market exists. After exploring the motivational drivers behind both second-hand and luxury consumption, five fashion-conscious Finnish women were interviewed on their second-hand luxury consumption habits to explore the motivational drivers of the consumers.

### **Conclusions**

The results of this study showed consistency with the literature on second-hand consumption and luxury consumption. Based on the results it can be concluded that product-related, social and personal factors drive second-hand luxury consumption. The findings of this study suggest that second-hand luxury consumers are motivated by a combination of these drivers. On the contrary, the study raises the issue of inauthenticity as a negative influencer of second-hand luxury consumption. Finally, even though eco-consciousness did not directly affect second-hand luxury consumption, the findings of this study show support for the circular economy -phenomenon.

**Key words:** Luxury, Second-hand, Consumer Behavior, Circular Economy

**Language:** English

**Grade:**

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Background**

The luxury market has been acknowledged for its lucrativeness for decades already. Moreover, the topic is gaining popularity among researchers as more and more people are starting to afford luxury goods (Chen et al. 2016). As it is important to understand the growing consumer segment, the motivational drivers influencing luxury purchasing have gained the attention of many. Though the motivational drivers have been categorized in academic research into e.g. personal and interpersonal drivers (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999), in truth every consumer is different and their motivations are influenced by multiple factors such as culture (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Nevertheless, exclusivity as well as superior quality are essential characteristics usually expected of luxury goods (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004).

However, the business is now changing. The purchasing of luxury products is no longer restricted to brand new products. Instead, second-hand luxury consumption is gaining popularity. In fact, the resale of high-quality goods has become a multi-million industry and it is now recognized as one of the fastest growing retail segments (ThredUP, 2016). Even though second-hand consumption itself is similarly acknowledged as a growing trend, second-hand consumers are driven by completely different motivations than luxury consumers, including economic, recreational and critical motivations (Roux & Guiot, 2010). Moreover, used goods are rarely associated with superior quality, an essential characteristic associated with luxury. This creates an interesting research gap as the two consumption modes combined must have their own motivational drivers.

Furthermore, there is an increasing demand for services supporting a circular economy. An example of this is the Finnish department store chain Stockmann which is now collaborating with an online store dedicated to reselling branded products (Arola, H., 2017). Again, this provides an interesting area for research, since luxury is often not associated with meanings of sustainability.

Being a fairly new phenomenon, the motivational drivers of second-hand luxury consumption are yet to be discovered. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative study is to get to know the consumer segment by exploring the reasoning behind their second-hand luxury purchasing.

## **1.2. Research Problem**

Second-hand consumption has been growing rapidly over the last decade and because of that it is now considered as a genuine alternative to traditional options. However, few studies have focused on the motives behind people choosing second-hand products over brand new ones.

On the other hand, luxury consumption is gaining a lot of interest mainly because it is a constantly growing multi-billion industry. Even though researchers have studied this consumption mode from multiple different viewpoints, the focus is on brand new luxury products. Despite being a fast-growing trend, second-hand luxury consumption is largely ignored in the area of research which creates an evident gap. Therefore, it is meaningful to get to know the consumer segment by investigating what fascinates the consumers in second-hand luxury products.

## **1.3. Research Questions and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the motivational drivers behind luxury consumption and how are they affected by culture?

The study will begin with a literature review, through which motivational drivers behind luxury consumption that have been discussed by previous studies will be identified. In

addition, a cross-cultural comparison of these drivers will be conducted.

## 2. What are the motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption?

The second objective of this study is to identify motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption. This will also be done through a review of previous literature.

## 3. What are the motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption?

Thirdly, the motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption will be identified. Secondary data on the topic will be collected and further discussed in the literature review. However, as very limited research exists on the topic, a qualitative exploration is carried out to identify the motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption. The qualitative exploration will be done in the form of interviews.

## 4. Why do some consumers prefer buying second-hand luxury over brand new luxury?

Finally, the findings of the study will be analyzed and compared to existing literature. The objective is to find out reasons for why some consumers prefer second-hand luxury over brand new.

### **1.4. Thesis Structure**

This introductory chapter has explained how this study relates to the phenomenon of both luxury and second-hand consumption. It has also introduced the circular economy concept and how it is related to this subject. Furthermore, the introductory chapter presented the research questions and objectives of this study. Next, the literature review will present relevant previous literature and answer the first two research questions. The methodology section will discuss the qualitative approach of this study

and explain how data was collected and analyzed. The findings of the data collection will be provided and furthermore analyzed in the following chapter. Finally, main findings will be concluded and implications for international business as well as suggestions for further research will be provided.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this literature review is to chart existing literature on motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption. More particularly, the reasons for why some consumers choose to buy their luxury products used rather than as brand new will be investigated. A motivation can be defined as “an activation, an incentive or reason to start or to maintain behavior” (Antonides & van Raaij, 1998). In order to market products in an efficient way it is meaningful to find out the incentives and reasoning that drive consumer behavior.

However, the topic is fairly new and very limited research exists on it. Therefore, the literature review will begin by reviewing existing literature on both luxury and second-hand consumption motivations. In addition, literature on the cross-cultural comparison of the motivations will be discussed. These two sections are followed by a review of the literature that does exist on second-hand luxury consumption. Finally, a conceptual framework will be proposed on the basis of this literature review.

### **2.1. Motivational Drivers Behind Luxury Consumption**

#### **2.1.1. Definition of Luxury**

Luxury goods are traditionally defined as goods which bring the owner esteem through mere usage or display, apart from any functional utility (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). In addition, superior quality and performance are expected of luxury goods (Vigneron & Johnson, 2004). The context of my thesis will be fashion luxury goods. The category includes apparel, accessories, handbags, shoes, watches, perfume and jewelry (Amatulli & Guido, 2011).

Although the concept of luxury is subjective, two types of reasons precede luxury consumption: external and internal motivations (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Amatulli & Guido, 2011). Theory evolving luxury consumption motivations relies highly on a framework that was developed by Vigneron and Johnson (1999). Their prestige-

seeking consumer behavior (PSCB) framework consists of three interpersonal effects and two personal effects.

### **2.1.2. The Veblenian Effect**

The first interpersonal effect states that Veblenian consumers are motivated by ostentation, and therefore they buy luxury goods to impress others. The value they are driven by is conspicuousness. Consumers who are driven by this value consume possessions through which they can communicate status and wealth to others (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). They consume conspicuous goods to enhance their own image or to inflate their ego (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004).

### **2.1.3. The Snob Effect**

The second interpersonal effect, the snob effect, occurs when a consumer is motivated by the exclusiveness of luxury goods. They perceive the unique value of luxury products and avoid consuming popular brands (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Because the snob consumers wish to distinguish themselves from others, these luxury consumers have a desire for products which others have limited access to. (Husic & Cicic, 2009). Developing and enhancing one's personal and social identity is also related to consumers' desire for uniqueness. A product's perceived uniqueness can increase its value and can lead to the consumer's improved standing in the societal hierarchy (Tian et al., 2001).

### **2.1.4. The Bandwagon Effect**

Finally, there is the bandwagon effect. This effect is related to the snob effect, but these consumers differ in their motivations in that they seek conformity through their luxury consumption (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). The extent to which a consumer is willing to associate or disassociate with members of their own or other's group is related to

the consumer's preference for conspicuously or inconspicuously branded products. Wealthy consumers with a low need for status prefer quiet signals whereas wealthy consumers with a high need for status prefer loud brands. The latter group wishes to signal their distinctiveness to the groups below them. On the other hand, the consumers who are not as wealthy but have a high need for status wish to aspire to be more like the groups above them, and therefore prefer products where the brand is clearly displayed (Han et al., 2010). Other research has also noted the importance of status in luxury consumption by noting that it can be used to signify a sought-after social position (O'Cass & McEwen, 2004) or to convey esteem or wealth (Bian & Forsythe, 2010).

Later research has proposed that the bandwagon and snob consumers are both driven by the same basic motivation: enhancing their self-image through luxury consumption. Indeed, it can be seen that the main purpose of luxury consumption is to impress others or to signal belonging to an admired group (Husic & Cicic, 2009).

#### **2.1.5. The Hedonist Effect**

The consumers affected by the hedonist effect believe that luxury goods can arouse feelings within themselves, therefore this personal effect is driven by emotional value (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Other research focusing on internal motivations has argued that consumers are internally motivated to satisfy their self-esteem by purchasing luxury goods that bring them self-directed pleasure (Truong & McColl, 2011; Amatulli & Guido, 2011). Previous literature has also suggested affect to be the most important factor when marketing luxury. When a consumer has a strong affect towards a brand, the likelihood of purchase is high. This affect can be generated by offering consumers fun and enjoyable.

### 2.1.6. The Perfectionist Effect

The second personal effect includes perfectionist consumers, who are motivated by the superior quality of luxury goods as well as other personal values that they relate to the goods. These consumers are driven by quality, and therefore the motivational drivers are product-centered (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Indeed, the premium quality of luxury goods is emphasized in the literature on luxury consumption motivations (Hung et al., 2011; Bian & Forsythe, 2010). Consumers derive reassurance from luxury goods as they expect them to be premium quality (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999).

Table 1 will summarize the motivational drivers of luxury consumption as discussed above.

*Table 1 Summary of motivational drivers behind luxury consumption*

Value	Motivation	Authors
Conspicuous	Veblenian	Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004
Unique	Snob	Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Husic & Cicic, 2009; Tian et al., 2001
Social	Bandwagon	Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Han et al., 2010; O'Cass & McEwen, 2004; Husic & Cicic, 2009; Bian & Forsythe, 2010.
Emotional	Hedonist	Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Truong & McColl, 2011; Amatulli & Guido, 2011; Bian & Forsythe, 2010
Quality	Perfectionist	Vigneron & Johnson, 1999; Hung et al., 2011; Bian & Forsythe, 2010

### 2.1.7. Implications

Finally, it should be noted that studying luxury consumption motivations is challenging per se. Researchers might be left with a lot of unexplained variance, which can be explained through the hedonic nature of some consumers' motivational drivers as well as psychographic factors (Husic & Cicic, 2009). For example, in the framework



conducted by Vigneron and Johnson (1999), self-consciousness was claimed to be influencing luxury consumption, more specifically brand selection.

Moreover, consumers in different markets around the world are not alike, which is a common subject in luxury consumption literature. One of the most important cultural distinctions is the difference between the Confucian collectivist's culture in Asia and the individualistic culture in the West. These cultural differences have a huge impact on one's luxury consumption behavior (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998). Therefore, this literature review will proceed with a cross-cultural comparison on luxury consumption factors.

#### **2.1.8. Cross-cultural Comparison of Luxury Consumption Motivations**

Research has noted that the cross-cultural comparison between the collectivist and individualistic cultures begins with the notion that the consistency of the Western consumer's private and public self does not apply to the Asian consumer. Because of the interpersonally oriented collectivist culture, Asians prefer public possessions that can be used to communicate economic status, whereas consumers from Western cultures consume luxury for the hedonic experience and private meanings (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998).

For Western consumers, internal factors are often dominant motivators in their luxury consumption. A research conducted within an Italian context revealed that consumers purchased luxury for personal gratification and also to enhance self-confidence (Amatulli & Guido, 2011). The same research showed quality as one of the main influencers to luxury consumption. Nonetheless, premium quality has been found to be a significant factor also in research conducted within a Chinese context (Hung et al. 2011). Other researchers have concluded that quality should be combined with brand image as an influencing factor, claiming that consumers use brand as an indicator for quality. The study was conducted in the context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which provides a new cultural dimension as a post-socialist post-war country (Husic and Cacic, 2009).

Even though the cultures are different, also similarities exist. A research conducted on American and Chinese consumers showed that the consumers from both cultures were more likely to buy a luxury product when they felt that the brand was consistent with both their intrinsic beliefs and social image (Bian & Forsythe, 2010). Moreover, it can be questioned whether luxury consumers do differ at all culturally as long as they belong in the same income class. Husic and Cicic (2009) claimed that high-class consumers from the USA, China, New Zealand, France and Bosnia and Herzegovina have the same buying habits when it comes to luxury.

Lastly, it should be noted that these cultural differences might change with time. A research conducted in Taiwan shows that even though the Taiwanese consumer is normally motivated by what other people think, some are also feeling intrinsic enjoyment in their luxury purchases. This could be a sign of a shift towards more individualistic motivations among the collectivistic culture (Wu et al., 2015). A study focusing on both developed and emerging markets found that conspicuousness, a significant external factor, was not an antecedent to luxury consumption, which was explained by consumers globally starting to avoid conspicuous displays of wealth (Shukla, 2012). Despite these findings, cultural differences are still a reality. Therefore, it is important to note that the context of my thesis will be Finland, a highly individualistic country, and therefore my findings will not be fully generalizable.

## **2.2. Motivational Drivers Behind Second-hand Consumption**

### **2.2.1. Definition of Second-hand Consumption**

Multiple different retailers on the marketplace have recently recognized the value of second-hand goods (Ferraro et al., 2016). A simple definition for second-hand consumption was suggested by Roux & Guoit (2008): “the acquisition of used objects through often specific modes and places of exchange”.

### **2.2.2. Economic Motivations**

Most often second-hand goods are associated with economic benefits (Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015; Isla, 2013; Yan et al., 2015; Ferraro et al., 2016). Many researchers have found frugality to be the main motivator of second-hand consumption (Cervellon et al., 2012; Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015). Also thrift, defined as careful management of resources, is mentioned as a practice in second-hand consumption. In order to consume better in the future, thrifty consumers save in the present through careful consumption (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005). Another economical practice in the context of second-hand shopping is bargain hunting (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Cervellon et al., 2012). Fundamentally bargain hunting is a tactic to save money. However, it can be seen that thriftiness and bargain hunting allows consumers to stretch their income and therefore spend money on multiple desires (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005).

Although research has shown that even the most affluent consumers take part in second-hand consumption, majority of the low-income consumers consume second-hand goods out of necessity (Williams & Paddock, 2003). Need, affordability and thrift are also the main drivers of second-hand consumption in less developed countries such as Zambia and the Philippines (Isla, 2013).

### **2.2.3. Recreational Motivations**

Roux & Guiot (2008) divided second-hand consumption motivations into two main dimensions, economic and recreational motivations. The recreational motivations explain the hedonic and experiential drivers of second-hand consumption. Second-hand consumers might be motivated to simply browse the second-hand channels for the mere pleasure of it (ibid). It can also be seen that consumers might engage in second-hand shopping for the thrill of the hunt (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005). Treasure hunting is an apparent driver of second-hand consumption in the literature (Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015; Roux & Guiot, 2008; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005). Consumers want to engage in this kind of activities simply because they feel it is fun and exciting,

and it can therefore even become a hobby (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005).

Nostalgia has been found to be a determinant of recreational motivations to buy second-hand goods. Some consumers browse second-hand outlets because they wish to find old, nostalgic objects. (Roux & Guiot, 2008). Related to nostalgia, it has also been found that people are choosing second-hand goods because traditional stores no longer have availability of desired products (Gullstrand Edbrind et al., 2015).

#### **2.2.4. Need for Uniqueness**

Tian et al. (2001) defined the need for uniqueness as follows: “the trait of pursuing differentness relative to others through the acquisition, utilization and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one’s self-image and social image”. Based on this definition, Roux & Guiot (2008) argued that the distinctiveness of second-hand products allows consumers to differentiate themselves from others by appropriating the unique character of the product. Other literature has also found that second-hand consumers might be motivated by their desire for uniqueness (Yan et al., 2015). Unique second-hand pieces can be used to express one’s individuality (Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015; Roux & Guiot, 2010).

#### **2.2.5. Critical Motivations**

A motivational driver that is nearly self-explanatory yet not as strong of a motivator is environmental consciousness, which motivates some consumers to buy second-hand goods (Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015). However, despite their efforts, many researchers have failed to show a direct relationship with environmental consciousness and second-hand consumption (Cervellon et al., 2012; Yan et al., 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015).

Roux and Guiot (2008) defined frugality as a “disciplined and careful use of money and objects”. Therefore, they claimed that it would be linked to eco-consciousness and

indeed found that economic motivations partly explained the recycling behaviors of their respondents. Bardhi and Arnould (2005) also found that all respondents in their study engaged in some recycling practices in relation to their second-hand consumption.

In their later research, Roux and Guiot (2010) added a third dimension of second-hand consumption motivations into their framework: critical motivations. These include distancing behaviors to the classic market system as well as ecological concerns. Cervellon et al. (2012), on the other hand, claim that eco-consciousness affects second-hand consumption through the bargain hunting mediator. To conclude, it seems that even if consumers are concerned with ecological issues, their behaviour is often inconsistent with these concerns (Cervellon et al., 2012; McNeill & Moore, 2015).

#### **2.2.6. Fashion-conscious Motivations**

This thesis will focus on the context of clothing retail and therefore the fashionability of second-hand products also becomes a concern. Cervellon et al. (2012) claimed that the mere concept of fashion is inconsistent with frugality, the main motivation they found for second-hand consumption. However, research conducted among college students found that consumers who are interested in creating a sense of style purchase second-hand products. The authors suggested that second-hand channels made it possible for these young consumers to maintain a desired unique style without spending too much money (Yan et al., 2015). A study by Ferrero et al. (2016) emphasizes the importance of fashionability as a motivation for second-hand consumption. They claim that nowadays it is considered fashionable to shop at second-hand retail stores, which is why fashion-seeking consumers would engage in this consumption mode. Indeed, their study found that 83% of second-hand consumers were driven by fashion-related motivations.

Table 2 will summarize the motivational drivers of second-hand consumption as discussed above.

*Table 2 Summary of motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption*

Value	Motivation	Authors
Frugality	Economic	Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015; Isla, 2013; Yan et al., 2015; Ferraro et al., 2016; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Cervellon et al., 2012; Williams & Paddock, 2003
Experiential/Hedonic	Recreational	Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015; Roux & Guiot, 2008; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005; Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015
Unique	Need for Uniqueness	Tian et al., 2001; Roux & Guiot, 2008; Roux & Guiot, 2010; Yan et al., 2015; Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015
Eco-consciousness	Critical	Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015; Cervellon et al., 2012; Yan et al., 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015; Roux & Guiot, 2008; Roux & Guiot, 2010; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005
Fashionability	Fashion-conscious	Cervellon et al., 2012; Yan et al., 2015; Ferraro et al., 2016

### **2.2.7. Challenges in the Second-hand Market**

Even though consumers might have good attitudes towards second-hand goods in general, the consumption of second-hand clothing might not be as desirable to many consumers. Hard materials are preferred over soft materials such as fabric, where the possibility of traces from the previous owner is higher (Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015). In addition, fear of the products being contaminated by previous owners can decrease some consumers' willingness to buy used clothing (Yan et al., 2015). It has been argued, however, that rejection due to this fear depends on the consumer's ability to view clothing as mere objects rather than viewing them as a part of their or the previous owner's extended self. On the other hand, some consumers might feel positive symbolic appropriation when exchanging clothing with friends and parents (Roux & Korchia, 2006).

Another concern for second-hand consumers is the authenticity of the second-hand

goods. This issue is crucial especially in the online second-hand markets. The more expensive the product, the bigger the risk a consumer perceives in terms of authenticity. In addition, consumers perceive authenticity based on brand-related attributes such as availability, origin and quality (Sihvonen & Turunen, 2016).

### **2.3. Motivational Drivers Behind Second-hand Luxury Consumption**

Despite the market segment's growth, existing literature on motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption is rather limited. Therefore, the mere definition of second-hand luxury is multifaceted in the literature. Authors have explained second-hand luxury consumption by combining multiple terms. Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) claimed second-hand luxury might include both vintage and collector's items, however, the goods are in a condition of a previously used item and they are acquired for actual use. As previously mentioned, Cervellon et al. (2012) studied the antecedents to purchasing vintage goods. Even though my thesis will not focus on vintage consumption, the findings of their study might affiliate to my thesis work. The authors have differentiated vintage from second-hand goods by claiming that vintage goods are goods that have not necessarily been used before. In addition, the age of the vintage item brings value to it (Cervellon et al., 2012).

Cervellon et al. (2012) found that frugality was not an antecedent to vintage fashion consumption. However, research has found meanings of frugality attached to second-hand luxury. Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) found that bargain hunting, an economic motivation, was associated with the consumption of second-hand luxury goods.

Research concerning vintage consumption suggested nostalgia as the main motivational driver. The study claimed that nostalgia affects vintage consumption both directly and indirectly through treasure hunting, i.e. hunting for a unique piece (Cervellon et al., 2012). The research on meanings attached to second-hand luxury goods has similar findings. The study found that a unique second-hand luxury possession might materialize through e.g. nostalgia, and that the authenticity of a used

luxury product could increase if it had nostalgic stories related to it (Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen, 2015). Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) also mentioned treasure-hunting in their research, defining treasures as limited edition or classic luxury products that are no longer being produced.

As mentioned before, most studies have not found direct relationships between eco-consciousness and the desire to buy second-hand goods yet (Cervellon et al., 2012; Yan et al., 2015; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Neither had sustainability a direct impact on the consumption of vintage in the study of Cervellon et al. (2012). Research conducted on ethical luxury has claimed ethics to be the least prioritized factor when purchasing luxury. The reasoning behind it was consumer's inability to believe that luxuries could make a difference (Davies et al., 2011). However, Turunen and Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) found that second-hand luxury goods were attached with meanings of sustainability. Nonetheless, they claimed that sustainability was a social-related motivation of second-hand luxury consumption: possessions could be justified with ethical reasoning. Their findings also suggested that consumers felt they could communicate a statement against overconsumption by consuming used luxury. This aligns with Roux & Guiot's (2010) finding on second-hand consumption's critical motivations.

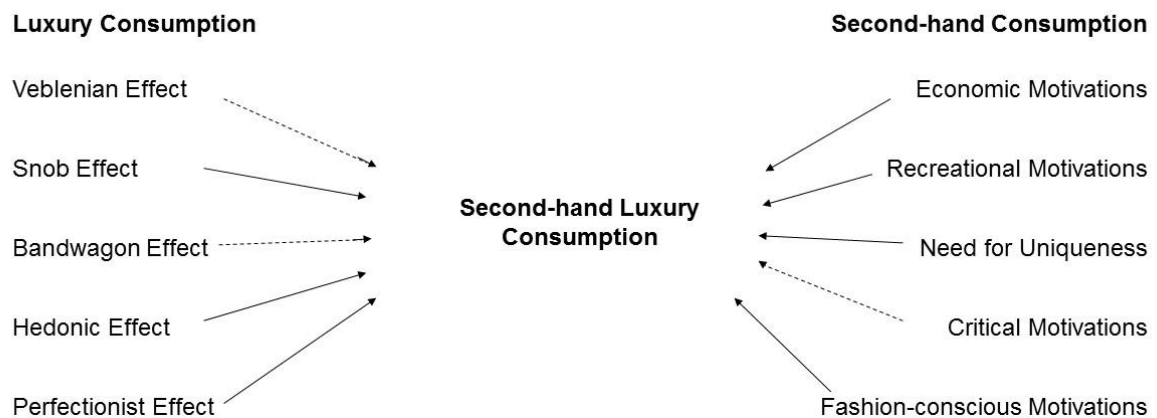
### **2.3.1. Cross-cultural Comparison of Second-hand Luxury Motivations**

Again, it is important to note the importance of culture. Both Cervellon et al. (2012) and Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) conducted their surveys in a Western context. However, other literature has noted the influence of culture on both second-hand and second-hand luxury consumption (Williams & Paddock, 2003; Isla, 2013). A study made in the context of Philippines revealed that Filipinos were motivated to buy second-hand luxury in order to gain social acceptance. Through wearing used high-end clothing they were able to achieve respect from others and furthermore, protect themselves from social disapproval (Isla, 2013). This aligns with the findings of previous research done on luxury consumption in the context of Southeast Asia (Wong & Ahuvia, 1998).



## 2.4. Conceptual Framework

Though research findings on second-hand luxury consumption exist, they need to be looked at critically. The existing research is largely based on previous literature. In addition, even though the literature on motivational drivers behind luxury consumption is rather comprehensive, the same drivers cannot be assumed of second-hand luxury consumption. Therefore, these findings on motivations of both luxury consumption as well as second-hand consumption will be used to propose a framework of possible motivations behind second-hand luxury consumption.



### 1 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework has been conducted on the basis of the literature review. The relevant motivational drivers of both luxury and second-hand consumption have been chosen and their possible connections to second-hand luxury consumption are proposed. The conceptual framework proposes that the Veblenian effect as well as the Bandwagon effect, both strongly social motivations, will not occur as strong drivers of second-hand luxury consumption. Even if consumers wanted to communicate their social status through luxury pieces, they might not be driven by those motivations when purchasing their luxury goods second-hand. It is assumed, however, that the snob effect as well as internal motivations of luxury consumption will occur as drivers of

second-hand luxury consumption.

As for the motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption, it is proposed that they all will, at least to some extent, be drivers of second-hand luxury consumption as well. However, it is assumed that the critical motivations, mostly eco-consciousness, will not directly affect second-hand luxury consumption.

This research aims to find out the possible validity of these propositions and consequently to discover motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Research Approach Rationale**

In order to reveal the best possible research approach, it is meaningful to compare different approaches. Quantitative and qualitative approaches are the two most commonly used data collection and analysis methods of research (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). The two vary greatly in the content, data output, and possible data collection techniques. The quantitative approach is used for precise measurement of a certain phenomenon using techniques which produce data that is measurable whereas the qualitative approach is used to reveal why and how a phenomenon exists (ibid). Because the objective of this study is to find out why some consumers choose to buy luxury goods second-hand, a qualitative approach was chosen as the method.

Moreover, the large gap in the existing research on second-hand luxury consumption was taken into account in the research approach consideration. Due to the lack of existing literature on the topic, this study can even be regarded as an exploratory research. The qualitative method allows for in-depth information to be gained, which is needed to understand the phenomenon. In addition, the qualitative research method was deemed best as it is an ideal method for studying purchase motivation (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

Though multiple different data collection techniques can be used in qualitative research, individual depth interviews were chosen as the most appropriate method for primary data collection as it is an ideal technique for discovering the personal motivations of the participants (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). As the chosen participants were located all around Finland, telephone interviews were chosen as the most convenient method. More specifically, semi-structured interviews were used as the data collection method in this study as they allow for the same specific questions to be asked of the participants but also permit a natural dialogue to occur between the participant and the interviewer (ibid).

### **3.2. Data Collection**

The data collection for this study consisted of two steps. Firstly, secondary data was collected through desk research. Secondly, primary data was collected through qualitative interviews.

#### **3.2.1. Desk Research as a Secondary Data Collection Method**

This study begun by responding to the first two research questions:

1. What are the motivational drivers behind luxury consumption and how are they affected by culture?
2. What are the motivational drivers behind second-hand consumption?

As the phenomenon of second-hand luxury consumption itself is little research, secondary data collection on the above topics was necessary. Relevant literature on these topics was discussed in the literature review and the motivational drivers were stated. In addition, existing literature on the topic of second-hand luxury were discussed. Based on this secondary data, a conceptual framework of the possible motivations behind second-hand luxury consumption was proposed.

#### **3.2.2. Primary Data Collection**

Individual depth interviews were conducted to collect primary data for this study. Five Finnish women were chosen as the interviewees. Three of these chosen participants are writers of fashion-related blogs who had discussed the topic of second-hand luxury in their blogs. All participants were chosen because they had purchased at least one second-hand luxury product and had interest in fashion. The women were aged between 22 and 48. Most of them had purchased their second-hand luxury products online either from Ebay.com, huuto.net or Facebook-groups dedicated to second-hand luxury selling. Luxury second-hand stores were also mentioned as retail channels that some of the participants used.

The chosen participants were contacted by email. All contacted participants agreed to take part in this study. All interviewees were informed of the purpose of this study and no compensation was offered to them. The interviews were semi-structured. A list of questions (Appendix) was prepared based on the research questions of this study and the conceptual framework proposed in the literature review. However, several additional questions were asked to gain a more in-depth understanding. The interviews lasted for between 10 to 30 minutes each. They were transcribed to written data afterwards, and the transcription resulted in nine pages of written text.

Table 3 below describes the basic information of all interviewees.

*Table 3 Basic information of the interviewees*

Interviewee #	Age	Occupation	# of purchased second-hand luxury goods	Purchase channel
1	29	Irrelevant	2	Second-hand luxury retail store, friend
2	25	Irrelevant	1	Ebay.com
3	24	Fashion blogger	2	Huuto.net
4	48	Fashion blogger	>15	Vestiairecollective.com, Facebook flea markets, second-hand luxury retail store
5	22	Fashion blogger	>5	Facebook flea markets

### **3.3. Data Analysis**

Content analysis (Cooper & Schindler, 2014) was chosen as the data analysis technique. After careful reading of the transcribed text, the data analysis process started by interpretation of the data. As certain topics were seen to reoccur, these topics were identified as thematic units. The data analysis process then continued by coding the data. The topics were color-coded thematically and finally the related topics were combined under each theme. These themes represented the interpreted motivational drivers behind the interviewees' responses, which were based also on the

research questions and the conceptual framework. The motivational drivers were then analyzed by drawing from the previous literature on both luxury and second-hand consumption motivations. Because the topic of second-hand luxury is not widely researched and consequently little theory on it exists, the nature of the analysis was inductive (ibid).

## 4. FINDINGS

In this section of the thesis the findings of the data collection will be presented. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and therefore the answers were translated to English by the interviewer.

### 4.1. Economic Motivations in the Context of Second-hand Luxury

Economic factors were named as motivational drivers for buying luxury goods second-hand instead of brand new. More specifically, the quality-price ratio of used luxury goods was named as an important factor. The respondents felt that luxury goods are usually so well-kept that the second-hand products were nearly equivalent to brand new ones in terms of quality.

Others associated second-hand luxury consumption with frugality. Second-hand luxury consumption was seen as a way to save money. This was also reasoned by the good quality-price ratio of second-hand luxury goods, meaning that you get the same quality you would get with a brand new product but more affordably.

Bargain hunting was another motivational factor that came up in the discussions. When asked reasons for why they prefer buying luxury second-hand, a respondent reasoned her behavior by having made “*good finds*” for a “*very affordable price*” (Interviewee 4). Though bargain hunting can also be a recreational motivation, it clearly had an economic background in this case.

Finally, the resale value of second-hand luxury products came up in the discussions. Purchases were reasoned by appealing to the profitable resale value of used luxury goods as the following quotation shows:

*“If I end up not liking the product, I will be able to resale it. Even my husband says that!”*  
– Interviewee 4

In addition to the above reasoning, it also became apparent that luxury goods were taken good care of for the purpose of possibly reselling them in the future. Overall, economic motivations were apparent in the findings of this study and the whole consumption mode was associated with meanings of frugality.

#### **4.2. Need for Uniqueness in the Context of Second-hand Luxury**

Another strong motivational factor that occurred in the interviews was the limited accessibility of some luxury products. Second-hand luxury goods were purchased either because they were limited-edition products no longer manufactured or the products had long waiting lists in traditional retail stores. In fact, when asked about their best second-hand luxury purchase so far, an interviewee argued that a backpack was her best find simply because she could not have bought it as brand new from the store.

Though uniqueness was not a common theme in the discussions, one interviewee mentioned that she perceived these limited-edition products to be more unique than brand new products:

*“I do kind of feel that the limited-edition luxury products are more unique than others. At one point, I tried to sell my Neverfull (Louis Vuitton) bag. I got annoyed as I saw them around town at all times. I ended up not selling the bag but I do feel that you do not see the products that are no longer manufactured as often as you do see brand new ones”. - Interviewee 4*

Limited-edition luxury goods were preferred because they enabled the consumer to differentiate more from the crowds. It was clearly not desirable to wear a more common bag that had become accessible to a larger group of people. Therefore, the desire for limited-edition products might also have a social background.



#### **4.3. Recreational Motivations in the Context of Second-hand Luxury**

All respondents said they take part in second-hand retail channels because of recreational motivations. This included both online channels as well as retail stores. Some browsed these sites to compare prices and some were looking for certain products. However, it became apparent that the respondents also engaged in these channels for the mere pleasure of it, even when they had no intention to buy anything. It was considered as a recreational activity to do when bored.

Thrill of the hunt was also mentioned in the interviews. Personal alerts were used on online sites to hunt down wanted items. In addition to this, one respondent had done multiple impulse second-hand luxury purchases simply because she had seen them as such good finds:

*“I feel a lot more thrilled when I make good second-hand finds versus when I find something on sale in traditional retail stores. I kind of get the feeling of being in the right place at the right time”. – Interviewee 4*

Some products were seen as good finds because they were limited-edition, which would refer to treasure hunting. However, some of the impulse purchases were simply products in a good condition with a reasonable price. Though price as an influencing factor could refer to bargain hunting, sought-after product-related qualities such as the good condition of the product and the design were also mentioned which would refer to the overall thrill of the hunt.

Nostalgia, which was mentioned in the literature review as a motivation for second-hand consumption, did occur in the interviews. The stories behind second-hand luxury goods were mentioned as influencing factors. The stories were regarded as amusing for some whereas others had appreciation towards the history of the product. The stories added the perceived value of the product, as the quotation exemplifies:

*“I guess I appreciate the product more when I know the story and history of the product in more detail”. – Interviewee 1*

Finally, one interviewee raised her opinion on the emotional value of luxury goods. When asked to reason her desire for luxury goods, she appealed to the good feeling she gets when wearing luxury pieces:

*“I don’t really know, there is just something about luxury products... It is kind of the same when you think about cars, you can either buy a 1000-euro car or you can buy a more expensive car, there is that feeling of driving the more expensive car which I also feel with bags. It gives you a nice feeling when you wear it.” – Interviewee 4*

This aligns with previous literature’s views on the hedonic motivations of luxury consumption. However, emotional factors were raised by only one interviewee. Moreover, her response related more to luxury products in general instead of second-hand luxury products specifically. Recreational motivations were related more to experiential factors such as the thrill of the hunt rather than emotional factors.

#### **4.4. The Perfectionist Effect in the Context of Second-hand Luxury**

As proposed in the conceptual framework, second-hand luxury consumption was also driven by the perfectionist effect. All respondents mentioned product-centered factors as motivational drivers. The different qualities of second-hand luxury products mentioned were good quality, good condition and durability. In addition, second-hand luxury goods were bought because they appeared as pleasing to the eye. Especially impulse purchases were described as interesting goods that fascinated the respondents enough to lead to purchase:

*“I did not really have any specific reason for my purchase, I was not necessarily looking for anything. The product just happened to be interesting to me.” – Interviewee 1*

If the consumers caught their eye on an interesting and attractive product, they would purchase it. Excluding the importance of good quality, other rational reasons such as how conventional a bag is were not mentioned. Instead the outlook and appearance of the product were emphasized.

Though fashion-conscious motivations did not arise from the discussions otherwise, the designs of certain brands were preferred and claimed to influence purchase. One respondent also mentioned the patina that leather goods obtain with time. She mentioned she prefers her bags, especially Louis Vuitton bags, to have browner leather instead of the light leather of brand new bags, which is why she would rather buy the bags second-hand.

Finally, it was confirmed from all the respondents that these qualities were not attached solely to brand new luxury products, instead these qualities were associated to second-hand products likewise and their influence on purchase was emphasized.

#### **4.5. Critical Motivations in the Context of Second-hand Luxury**

All interviewees were asked two questions related to eco-consciousness. They were first asked if they would consider themselves interested in environmental issues and sustainability. After that they were asked whether they felt that their interest in these critical issues had affected their second-hand luxury consumption. All interviewees considered themselves somewhat interested in environmental issues. They described their recycling behavior and how they preferred to buy high quality clothes instead of fast fashion. Here one respondent mentioned "*consumption hysteria*" (Interviewee 3) which she preferred not to be part of. In addition, multiple respondents said that their consumption cycle was affected by this, meaning that they did want to resell products they no longer used. Thus, it was believed that eco-consciousness influenced selling behavior more than purchasing behavior.

Even though all respondents described themselves as eco-conscious consumers, only one of them felt that their second-hand luxury consumption was driven by this factor.

She plead to the massive production of luxury goods, which is why she felt that she was participating in recycling behavior through her second-hand luxury consumption. None of the other respondents were motivated to buy second-hand luxury because of critical factors even if they did think of environmental factors in their overall consumption, which is exemplified in the following quotation:

*“I do believe in recycling in that you resell the clothes you no longer wear. I also believe that when you have a more expensive and high quality product, it is easier to take care of it and you also wear it in a different way because you have spent money on it and you want it to stay in good condition. You might want it to keep its value so that you can resell it or give it to someone. However, the more you know how those brands operate, I do not believe that when only the consumer recycles, it would have a great impact on the environment. There are not that many luxury consumers so I believe that if there is a desire for more environmental friendliness or sustainability, it should start more from the brand’s initiative and the way they operate”. – Interviewee 2*

Thus, the interviewee believed that her consumption behaviour cannot have a great influence on environmental issues. The infrequency of luxury purchases, both brand new and second-hand, was also used to reason the little influence that one’s consumption could have on the environment. However, the findings show an overall interest towards environmentalism and how it influences more on the reselling practices of consumers.

#### **4.6. Authenticity in the Context of Second-hand Luxury**

As discussed in the literature review, authenticity is a big concern for second-hand consumers. This issue is crucial especially in the online second-hand markets. In addition, the risk a consumer perceives in terms of authenticity is increased the more expensive the product, which is why authenticity is especially crucial in the context of second-hand luxury. Furthermore, the fear of inauthenticity is increased when engaging in customer to customer markets instead of a trusted retail store.

Authenticity was an issue that occurred in the interviews. None of the respondents felt comfortable with buying fake luxury products. The interviewees appealed to that kind of behavior being against their own values and principles. In addition, it was believed that a fake luxury good would be less meaningful and have less value in comparison to an authentic one. A desire to respect the original designers of the brands was also apparent in the discussions. Others also mentioned the discomfort caused by knowing the crime involved in the fake luxury retail. The consumers did not want to support this kind of illegal activity.

In addition, it occurred in the interviews that some consumers felt truly concerned about inauthenticity when buying second-hand luxury. They described how they had had to research a lot of information on authenticity to dare buy these second-hand luxury goods:

*“I bet I would buy more (second-hand luxury) but the problem is that it is so difficult to verify the authenticity and quality of the product so the process of finding out these facts seems very burdensome. There are so many fraudster sellers out there so the effort one must make for these products seems extortionate. I just feel that it is easier to buy brand new products even if it costs a bit more.” – Interviewee 1*

The interviewees who did not feel concern for authenticity appealed to their familiarity with certain brands. They also mentioned that they were able to ensure authenticity by receiving the original receipt of the product with their purchases. Moreover, second-hand luxury retail stores were seen as reliable channels for purchase as the shopkeeper's ability to verify authenticity was trusted.

In addition, social factors came up when discussing authenticity. Literature on luxury consumption discusses the interpersonal motivations that drive consumption. Though interpersonal motivations were not directly named as influencing factors, one interviewee was concerned about how other people would react to her wearing fake luxury pieces:

*“I guess when you purchase a fake luxury product, everyone will notice it is fake and*

*because of that it will be less meaningful or valuable and then you will feel that you are fooling both yourself and other people.” – Interviewee 2*

To her, authenticity was clearly related to social acceptance. In fact, unlike the other interviewees, the interviewee of the above quotation did not associate meanings of quality to authentic products exclusively:

*“Quality of the products is important to me. However, I would not necessarily say that fake products have inferior quality when compared to new ones. I don’t see fakes and poor quality being interconnected.” – Interviewee 2*

Therefore, it could be concluded that for her, the authenticity of luxury had more social meanings rather than the product-related qualities being dependent on authenticity, whereas others related authenticity to product-related qualities as well as their personal values.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Based on the findings of this study main motivational drivers of second-hand luxury consumption can be discussed. Even though it needs to be noted that very limited literature exists on the topic of second-hand luxury, most observations in this study can however be applied and compared to previous literature either on luxury consumption or second-hand consumption. The motivational drivers that occurred in the findings can be categorized into product-related, personal and social motivations that influence the purchasing of second-hand luxury consumers.

### **5.1. Product-related Motivations of Second-hand Luxury Consumption**

The product-related motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption include economic motivations, the perfectionist effect and partly the desire for limited-edition luxury goods.

Previous literature on second-hand consumption has named frugality as the main motivator of second-hand consumption (Cervellon et al, 2012; Gullstrand Edbring et al., 2015). The same motivational driver occurred in the findings of this study, as second-hand luxury consumption itself was considered as a means to save money. However, a stronger pattern related to second-hand luxury consumption seemed to be the quality-price ratio. The interviewees preferred second-hand products over brand new ones because they felt like they received the same quality for a more affordable cost. In fact, all interviewees found that the second-hand luxury goods had the same qualities as brand new ones. In addition to the quality-price ratio, another new meaning that can be added to economic motivations based on this study is the resale value of luxury goods. Second-hand luxury purchases were justified by pleading to the profitability of reselling the goods.

As mentioned, it was believed that second-hand luxury goods had the same qualities as brand new ones. The most important product-related attribute mentioned was the good quality of these products, which aligns with Vigneron & Johnson's (1999)

perfectionist effect. Moreover, the outlook and appearance of the products were deemed important, which also agrees with Vigneron & Johnson's (1999) definition of luxury that states how luxury goods bring the owner esteem through mere usage or display, apart from any functional utility.

The second most common reason for buying second-hand luxury was the limited accessibility of some luxury goods. The same motivational driver is apparent in second-hand consumption literature. Gullstrand Edbring et al. (2015) found that people are choosing second-hand goods because traditional stores no longer have availability of desired products. Turunen & Leipämaa-Leskinen (2015) also mentioned treasure-hunting in their research, defining treasures as limited edition or classic luxury products that are no longer being produced. Similarly, most consumers in this study were consuming second-hand luxury because they desired specific products that were no longer being produced.

## **5.2. Personal Motivations of Second-hand Luxury Consumption**

The motivational drivers of second-hand luxury consumption that can be categorized as personal motivations include recreational motivations as well as critical motivations.

Overall, recreational motivations were apparent in the findings of this study. Previous literature discusses second-hand consumption as a pleasurable, fun activity (Roux & Guiot, 2008; Bardhi & Arnould, 2005), which complies with the findings of this study as well. Second-hand luxury consumers took part in the consumption process because of the experiential factors and especially the recreational browsing behavior was a prominent part of the process. Thrill of the hunt, which is also discussed in earlier literature on second-hand consumption (Bardhi & Arnould, 2005), was further found as a motivational driver behind second-hand luxury consumption in this study. Impulse buying habits were also related to the hunt for second-hand luxury goods.

As for critical motivations, the results of this study showed how eco-consciousness did not directly affect the consumption of second-hand luxury goods, which aligns with the



proposition made in the conceptual framework. As already discussed in the literature review, even if consumers are concerned with ecological issues, their behaviour is often inconsistent with these concerns (Cervellon et al., 2012; McNeill & Moore, 2015). Davies et al. (2011) claimed that consumers did not prioritize ethics when consuming luxury because they because they did not believe luxuries could make a difference. The results of this study provide the same explanation for second-hand luxury consumption, as most of the respondents in this study neither felt that their consumption could influence the environment. The overall unethical operations of the luxury brands as well as the infrequency of second-hand luxury purchases were appealed to. However, the results of this study do support the idea of a growing interest towards a circular economy. Even though environmental factors did not influence purchase, the respondents mentioned their reselling habits when asked about their interest in environmental issues. Thus, this study shows how eco-consciousness has an influence on the reselling behaviour of consumers.

Nevertheless, discrepancies with previous literature on personal motivations of luxury consumption also occurred. Firstly, even though emotional value was mentioned by one of the respondents, it was related more to the overall luxury consumption rather than the purchase motivation of second-hand luxury goods. Therefore, the results of this study do not bring meaning to Vigneron & Johnson's (1999) hedonist effect within the concept of second-hand luxury consumption. Secondly, contrary to the proposition made in the conceptual framework, fashion-conscious motivations did not occur as influencers of second-hand luxury consumption in this study. Earlier literature on second-hand consumption has named fashionability as a motivational driver (Yan et al., 2015; Ferrero et al., 2016). The reason it did not occur as a direct influencer in this study could be the type of products the respondents had purchased. Instead of fashion apparel, the consumers in this study had mainly bought luxury accessories such as handbags second-hand.

### **5.3. The Social Motivations of Second-hand Luxury Consumption**

Though less significant as product-related and personal, social motivations can also

be identified from the findings. In this study, the social factors were related to limited-edition second-hand luxury goods as well as the authenticity of the goods. However, the social motivations of second-hand luxury consumption might have deeper meanings than the two other categories and would therefore require further exploration.

Roux & Guiot (2008) argued for the distinctiveness of second-hand products which allows consumers to differentiate themselves from others. In addition to second-hand consumption literature, uniqueness is also a motivational driver in previous literature on luxury consumption. Even though only one of the interviewees appealed to her need for uniqueness, the underlying cause for the desire for limited-edition goods could be the desire to be unique as discussed in earlier literature. As the interviewee mentioned, she did not like carrying her Louis Vuitton bag that was rather mainstream. Instead, she felt her limited-edition goods made her more unique. This result agrees with Vigneron & Johnson's (1999) snob effect. Hucic and Cicic (2009) explained how snob consumers have a desire for products others have limited access to, which would explain the results of this study as well. Consumers valued their second-hand luxury possessions not for their functionality but rather for the fact that they were not easily accessible.

In addition to the desire for uniqueness, social factors related to authenticity were discussed. The fear of inauthenticity was strong, and fake luxury goods were believed to have a negative influence socially. Though some consumers related authenticity with good quality, it became apparent that for others, it was primarily a social issue. Interestingly, the finding complies with a study made in the context of Philippines (Isla, 2013) which found that Filipinos were motivated to purchase second-hand luxury to gain social acceptance. As in the findings of this study, where second-hand luxury goods were preferred over fake ones for the same reason.

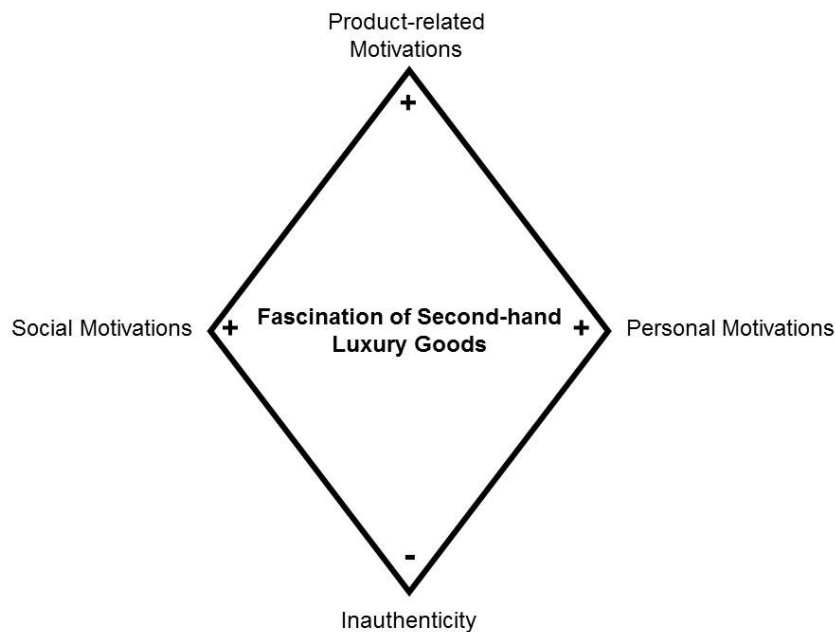
Nevertheless, the absence of strong social motivations is inconsistent with previous scholarly work on luxury consumption. The luxury consumption literature often focuses on the interpersonal motivations for luxury consumption, such as Vigneron & Johnson's (1999) Veblenian, bandwagon and snob effects which were also discussed in the literature review. However, as also proposed in the conceptual framework, social

factors excluding the snob effect did not occur as strong influencers of second-hand luxury consumption. This can be explained by the nature of the interviews. The interviewees were not asked about their motivation to wear and display (second-hand) luxury goods, instead the focus of the interviews was on the motivational drivers behind their purchase decisions. Social factors were however mentioned when discussing the authenticity of second-hand luxury goods as well as in the discussions related to uniqueness, which does bring social meanings to second-hand luxury consumption as well.

#### **5.4. The Negative Influence of Inauthenticity**

In addition to these three main categories of motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption, the negative influence of inauthenticity was apparent in this study. In fact, the fear of inauthenticity in the context of second-hand luxury, discussed by Sihvonon & Turunen (2016), was further confirmed by the findings of this research. As discussed also in the earlier literature, especially the respondents shopping in online second-hand channels expressed their concern for the authenticity of second-hand luxury products. Furthermore, multiple interviewees of this study emphasized the burdensome process of verifying the authenticity of second-hand luxury goods. These perceptions could also be seen influencing their frequency of purchase: the more concern for inauthenticity the fewer second-hand luxury products the respondents had purchased.

Figure 2 below illustrates the drivers that influence the fascination of second-hand luxury goods.



*Figure 2 Structuring the Motivational Drivers of Second-hand Luxury Consumption and their Influence on the Fascination of Second-hand Luxury Goods*

As can be seen in the figure, it can be concluded that social, personal and product-related motivations all have a positive influence on the fascination of second-hand luxury goods. The fourth factor, fear of inauthenticity, influences the fascination of second-hand luxury goods negatively. However, different consumers are influenced by different factors and also have different perceptions of inauthenticity.

Consumers that are more driven by social motivations place more emphasis on the negative social influence of inauthenticity. On the other hand, consumers that place emphasis on the product-related factors and personal motivations will not consider fake products because they relate inauthenticity with poor quality or because it is against their values. In addition, the more emphasis was put on the experiential value of second-hand luxury consumption, the less the consumers were bothered by the process of verifying authenticity. Contrary to the consumers mainly motivated by the product-related factors, who felt that the process was burdensome because they wanted to be certain of the authenticity and quality of the products. They also engaged in the browsing of sites mainly to compare prices, whereas the consumers who were more motivated by personal factors did it for the fun of it. However, the findings suggest

that even the consumers motivated by product-related factors might be more motivated by the limited accessibility of the good rather than other product-related factors, which can be the result of a social motivation.

All in all, it is apparent that second-hand luxury consumers are motivated by a combination of these drivers. Moreover, these different types of motivations not only reveal the drivers of consumption, but they can also be used to determine the types of products as well as purchasing channels that these consumers prefer.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1. Main Findings**

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption. After defining the most common motivational drivers of both luxury and second-hand consumption in the literature review, the objective was to uncover reasons for some consumers preferring second-hand luxury over brand new. Through the qualitative study several drivers discussed in the literature review were also found to apply to second-hand luxury consumption. Furthermore, the findings have importance because of the gap in existing research on this topic.

The findings of this study helped to identify multiple different motivational drivers for second-hand luxury consumption. The motivations were divided into product-related, personal and social motivations. Product-related motivations were identified as common drivers of second-hand luxury consumption. These included economic factors as well as the limited accessibility of some goods, both also motivational drivers of second-hand consumption. However, the findings brought new meaning specific for second-hand luxury consumption, such as the quality-price ratio and resale value which were confirmed to drive second-hand luxury consumption. In addition, second-hand luxury consumption was confirmed to be a recreational activity similarly to second-hand consumption. Even though eco-consciousness is apparent in previous literature on second-hand consumption, it did not have a direct influence on second-hand luxury consumption based on the findings of this study. However, the findings show an interest in recycling behaviour related to a circular economy, as eco-consciousness was found to influence the reselling practices of consumers. Fashion-conscious motivations did not come up as influencers of second-hand luxury consumption in this study.

As previous literature on luxury consumption also suggests, the product-related motivational drivers that include the superior quality of goods were expected from second-hand luxury goods likewise. Furthermore, the findings of this study showed that that the same sought-after qualities existed also in used luxury goods and were confirmed as motivational drivers behind second-hand luxury consumption.

Discrepancies with previous literature on luxury consumption existed in terms of emotional motivations, which were not identified as drivers of second-hand luxury consumption in this study. Similarly, the interpersonal motivations apparent in luxury research were not confirmed by this study apart from the snob effect which appeared as a social driver behind limited-edition second-hand luxury purchases.

Finally, this study raises the issue of inauthenticity which was identified as a negative influencer of second-hand luxury consumption. Consumers regarded the process of verifying the authenticity of second-hand luxury goods as burdensome, which consequently had a negative influence on purchase motivation. The perception of authenticity was different among different consumers. Social motivations were revealed behind the fear of inauthenticity of second-hand luxury goods among some consumers.

## **6.2. Implications for International Business**

Even though this study was made in the context of Finland, the findings of this study combined with the increasing popularity of retail channels designated to second-hand luxury selling clearly demonstrate a growing trend. Furthermore, as the online channels such as Ebay.com and Vestiairecollection.com are international sites where the products exchange owners across different countries, the scope of the phenomenon is international. As the trend continues to grow, the findings of this study will be useful for retailers engaging in the second-hand luxury market as they will have a better understanding of the new consumer segment and their motivational drivers. Moreover, these findings support the idea of a growing demand for services supporting a circular economy, which businesses can take advantage of.

Nevertheless, the individualistic culture of Finland has surely influenced the results of this study. Especially the absence of social factors in the findings of this study can be to some extent explained by the context of this study. Therefore, the phenomenon must be studied in other contexts to gain a better understanding of it.

### **6.3. Suggestions for Further Research**

It is evident that there exists a need for further research on the concept of second-hand luxury consumption and especially the motivational drivers influencing it. Even though the literature on luxury and second-hand consumption are somewhat applicable to second-hand luxury consumption, this study has made it clear that the phenomenon has its unique motivations.

In order to study the phenomenon further, more academic research needs to be done on the topic to gain more empirical data. The sample of this study was small, and consequently, the results are not generalizable. Furthermore, the data collection of this study was limited to the context of Finland. Therefore, the phenomenon should be studied in other contexts to gain an understanding of it in other cultures.

This study also raised certain limitations of the trend that are worthy of studying. An example of this is the fear of inauthenticity which seems to limit the consumption of second-hand luxury goods especially in the online context. Further research could focus on ways to diminish the perceived risk of inauthenticity, which would in turn increase the attractiveness of second-hand luxury products.

In addition to the limitations of the consumption mode, the specific motivational drivers that were discussed in the findings of this study can be researched further. It would be especially interesting to study the motivation to buy limited-edition products, as it can be related to the desire for uniqueness even more so than to the product itself. Overall, as the phenomenon of second-hand luxury consumption continues to grow, the need for further research also increases.



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## APPENDIX

### Interview Questions:

1. Mistä olet ostanut käytettyjä luksustuotteita?
2. Mitä luksustuotteita olet ostanut käytettynä?
3. Miksi olet ostanut luksustuotteita käytettynä uuden sijaan?
4. A. Miten kuvailisit niitä tuotteita, mitkä ominaisuudet niissä on tärkeitä?  
B. Koetko että käytetyissä tuotteissa on samat ominaisuudet?
5. Onko edellinen omistaja merkinnyt ostoksessa jotain?
6. Onko sinulla aina ollut tarve tuotteille vai oletko tehnyt heräteostoksia?
7. Selaatko joskus huvia vuoksi netin käytettyjen luksustuotteiden myyntisivustoja?
8. Ostaisitko feikkiä luksustuotetta?
9. Huolestuttaako sinua ostamiesi käytettyjen luksustuotteiden aitous?
10. A. Oletko yleisesti ottaen ympäristöasioista ja kestävästä kuluttamisesta kiinnostunut?  
B. Vaikuttaako ympäristöasiat ja kestävä kuluttaminen ostopäätökseesi ostaessasi käytettyjä luksustuotteita?
11. Oletko itse myynyt omia luksustuotteitasi eteenpäin?
12. Mikä on ollut paras second-hand löytösi?

### Translation:

1. Where have you bought second-hand luxury goods from?
2. What type of second-hand luxury products have you bought?
3. Why have you bought luxury goods second-hand instead of brand new?
4. A. How would you describe these products, what qualities are important for you?  
B. Do you feel that the same qualities exist in second-hand luxury goods?
5. Do you attach any meaning to the previous owner of the product?
6. Have you always looked for a certain product or have you also done second-hand luxury purchases on impulse?
7. Do you sometimes browse second-hand luxury selling channels just for the fun of it?
8. Would you purchase a fake luxury product?
9. Have you felt worried about the inauthenticity of your second-hand luxury purchases?
10. A. Would you consider yourself interested in environmental issues and sustainability?  
B. Does environmentalism and sustainability affect your purchase decision when buying luxury goods second-hand?

11. Have you resold your luxury products?

12. What has been your best second-hand luxury purchase?